The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts of editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1900 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1947 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 37, NO. 36

LABOR'S GOAL! To Repeal Taft-Hartley Law

ILGWU Plans $1,800,000 Emergency Fund; Favors UN Probe of World Slave Labor

Forest Park, Pa.—The general executive board of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union announced plans to raise a fund of $1,-800,000 during the next three years to be used in part to meet any organizational emergencies resulting from the Taft-Hartley law.

David Dubinsky, ILGWU president, said the fund, which is to be raised through $1.50 annual assessments on union members, is necessary to "prevent any necessity of placing a lien on the reserve funds of the union."

Officials said that the money would be in addition to the $500,000 fund authorized to fight the Taft-Hartley law. The latter, to be raised by voluntary contributions, would discourage in part the union's new political department which will direct the ILGWU's efforts to have the labor measure repealed.

Part of the proceeds from the new tax will be used to finance the union's network of frequency modulation radio stations and pay increased administrative costs, according to the board.

At its closing session here, the board also announced that it had drafted a resolution which it will present to the American Federation of Labor at its convention in San Francisco urging the parent organization to ask the United Nations for a thorough investigation of "slave labor" in foreign countries.

Members of the board declared that the expanding system of "slave labor" was a dangerous threat to the world's hard-won, hard-earned rights and human rights of the free workers of all nations.

The resolution demands that the AFL ask the United Nations Social Council of the UN to commission the International Labor Office to carry out the following program:

"Make a thorough investigation of the extent of forced labor in all members of the United Nations.

"Recommend positive action for eliminating this tragic and inhuman evil.

Another resolution drafted by the board for presentation to the AFL convention asks the latter to urge Congress to enact the Stratton bill which would permit 400,000 displaced persons to enter America over a period of four years.

Mr. Dubinsky said that the board also had decided to investigate conditions in the cotton garment industry where 100,000 workers have asked better standards. He said the board will study the problems involved and take "appropriate steps necessary to alleviate the conditions," he added.

The board also took the following delegates to the AFL convention: Julius Hochman, Harry Wender, Benjamin Kaplan and John Gelbs, all of New York; Louis Hyman, Max Perry, San Francisco, Charles Kriendler of Baltimore, and Nick Halperin of Boston. Mr. Dubinsky will complete the delegation.

Family Food Costs Double; Public Poll Sees No Relief

Princeton, N. J.—Public opinion places the family's weekly expenditures for food at nearly double the amount spent in 1942, according to the latest study made by the American Institute of Public Opinion, more commonly known as the Gallup Poll.

The current median average expenditure for non-farm families is $51.4 a week, an increase of 94 since March, 1946, and $10 since April, 1945.

These increases, as reported by the people who buy the food, are greater than the reported increases in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' consumers' price index which merely reflects the prices at retail and not the total expenditures made by a family for necessary food.

Furthermore, the public is thoroughly discouraged about the future prospects for the general price level. In response to a question, "Do you think the prices of things you buy will be higher, lower or the same six months from now?", 61 percent replied that prices would be higher. Thirty percent thought prices would be about the same, while only 21 percent were optimistic enough to predict lower levels.

On the question of wages, there was little hope that wages increases would be realized. Only 18 percent of the people questioned on the subject expressed the opinion that wages would be raised in the near future. Forty-four percent thought wages would be the same and 27 percent forecast lower wages at the end of a year.

The results of this public opinion poll confirm the position taken by the American Federation of Labor which has consistently demonstrated the trend toward higher and higher prices, while profits are at record levels, as an unjust squeeze on the American worker.

Industrialist Warns Foes of Labor: Advocates $35 Weekly Minimum Wage

Washington, D. C.—Robert Wood Johnson, one of America's leading industrialists, sounded a warning to his fellow business leaders.

Mr. Johnson, chairman of the board of Johnson & Johnson, manufacturers of surgical dressings, cautioned businessmen against the growing tension between labor and management may result in doom for the free enterprise system.

In a recently published book entitled, "Or Forfeit Freedom," Johnson argues that to avoid disaster, "we must chart a new course in which industry voluntarily will polish up union efforts, putting our economic system to work at peak efficiency."

"If we want the private enterprise, we shall have some other system forced upon us, not by politicians from Europe, but by popular demand," he asserts.

"Americans have seen what their productive power can do; they will never again submit meekly to the monopoly of production by politics. Condemning the brutal tactics used by some business leaders in the past to combat unions, Johnson pointed out that many of these leaders still rule private corporations.

"That explains why some of these corporations are unpopular," he says.

Warning against the spread of class warfare now engaged in only by small minority of labor and business leaders, Johnson says:

"One way to bring it about is to use such drastic controls on labor that the majority will join the rebels."

Johnson does not confine his criticism to the activities of business leaders. He is critical of what he regards as poor practices on the part of some unions and labor leaders, but he believes that genuine labor statesmanship can overcome many of the faults he observes.

While critical of some of labor's leaders, Johnson nevertheless pictured that they have "had" leadership. He says:

"Unions will not be knocked out by force but by the private enterprise, or they will have some other system forced upon us, not by politicians from Europe, but by popular demand," he asserts.

"Americans have seen what their productive power can do; they will never again submit meekly to the monopoly of production by politics.

Another highlight in Johnson's program is his advocacy of an $875 cent minimum hourly wage. No family in America, he declares, can subsist on less than $35 weekly.

Johnson's program also calls for elimination of monopoly; reduction of taxes to stimulate production; construction of modern, healthful housing; defense expenses, and many other reforms.

In short, he says, business must be guided by a spirit of "social service" to the people, and labor must do its part unstinting by or private enterprise will not survive.

City Labor Council Plans Gymnasium As Memorial to AFL Men Killed In War

New York City.—The AFL's Central Trades and Labor Council announced plans for a "living memorial" to members of the American Federation of Labor who died in World War II.

The memorial will take the form of a five-story gymnasium and recreation building, expected to cost from 900 to 12,000 of the city's young people each year.

Cost of the project is estimated at $500,000, of which $400,000 will be raised by the AFL unions comprising the Central Trades and Labor Council. Ninety AFL leaders approved plans for the project.

The project was described at a luncheon meeting of the AFL group by Brother S. A. Ryan, athletic director of Power Memorial Academy, Manhattan Avenue and Sixty-first Street. The building, Brother Ryan said, will be erected on land owned by the Academy at a cost of $500,000, of which $70,000 already has been raised by the Academy. The school will provide another $50,000—forty-eight of the alumni worked in the war—will share in the tribute represented by the building.

Brother Ryan emphasized that the building would be administered by the Academy, but with the cooperation of the Police Athletic League for youths from all parts of the city.

William Collins, regional director of the American Federation of Labor, explained that the building would be open to all youths, regardless of race, color or creed.

Brother Ryan, Memorial Academy, although operated by the Christian Brothers, is a non-sectarian school and does not require the study of religious subjects.

Thomas A. Murray, president of the State Federation of Labor, presided at the luncheon. It was announced that Martin F. Lacey, president of the Central Trades and Labor Council, would be general chairman of the labor committee to raise the $400,000.

Green Says Labor's 'Hatred' For Labor Law 'Deeper And Stronger'

C. J. MacGowan, Boilermakers' Chief, Appointed 13th Vice-President of AFL

Chicago. — The AFL Executive Council appointed Charles J. MacGowan, president of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, 12th vice-president of the American Federation of Labor.

As an AFL vice-president, Mr. MacGowan becomes a member of the Executive Council and it was expected that he would go to Chicago to join the council now in session there.

Mr. MacGowan succeeds G. M. Bugniazet who resigned following his retirement as secretary of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

In January, 1944, MacGowan was elected president of the Boilermakers after serving as international vice-president and international representative of the union for a period of years. He has been a member of the union for 40 years.

MacGowan was born in Argyllshire, Scotland in 1887. At the age of 19 he came to Canada with his father who was a stonemason and a member of the British Trade union movement.

He served his apprenticeship as a boilermaker on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad which is now a part of the Canadian National System. In 1910 he came to the United States and held his first job in this country on the Rock Island Railroad. He was active in union affairs and held numerous offices in the union prior to his association with the International.

In addition to the offices held in his own organization, MacGowan was for four successive terms labor representative of the Tri-City Central Body of Moline-Rock Island-Davenport and also served at one time as assistant to the president of the AFL's Railway Employes Department.

Building Trades Wages Lag; Papers Distort True Picture

Washington, D. C.—Newspaper treatment of a recent report issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics concerning the increase in wage rates for building tradesmen was a good example of "scissors and paste" journalism, with the headlines appearing in half the story, thereby distorting the over-all picture.

The BLS report showed that wages of building workers had increased 15 percent in the year ending July 1, 1947. This gain represented the largest yearly increase since 1920.

Newspapers by and large got most of the facts right but they stopped there, while the BLS release went on to discuss the wage questions in terms of building workers' real purchasing power as prices advance during the same periods.

The lag in wages, the cost of living and building materials prices was pointed out by the BLS, a fact which newspaper accounts largely ignored completely. In discussing the situation the BLS report declared:

"The total increase (in wages) over the 8-year period between July 1939 and July 1947 amounted to approximately 49 percent. During this same period, the Bureau's consumers' price index increased by 59 percent and the average primary market (wholesale) prices of building materials by approximately 96 percent."

The true picture, as set forth in the BLS summary, is that while building tradesmen improved their position in regard to take-home pay, they have slipped further behind in their struggle to keep up with the cost of living. At the same time consumers were forced to pay nearly twice as much for building materials.

Newspaper editors who saw fit to eliminate this information from their accounts are playing right into the hands of those who, while enjoying exorbitant profits, are doing their utmost to make labor appear to be the "great" responsible for the current high living costs.

Anti-Labor Forces Active In States; Many Restrictive Laws Passed In 1947

Washington, D. C.—The states took their part in the anti-labor crusade of 1947 by enacting various types of laws restricting the activities of trade unions.

Briefly reviewing these laws, the Labor Department issued an analysis of the action taken by the various states in the field of industrial relations.

Legislation enacted included "right-to-work" or anti-closed shop laws, restriction of strike activities, prohibition of secondary boycotts and jurisdictional strikes, anti-picketing laws and the regulation of labor relations in public utilities. In some states omnibus laws covering a wide variety of subjects were enacted.

Four states adopted laws prohibiting the closed shop or other types of security. Most of them provide, in general, that the right to work shall not be denied or abridged because of membership or nonmembership in a labor union. The majority of them ban contracts which require membership or nonmembership as a condition of employment. The severity of the restrictions varies considerably from state to state. The Massachusetts law does not prohibit the closed shop, as such, but does deny it under conditions in which it is shown that union members did not have an opportunity to exercise their full voting rights in consideration of the issue.

Legislation to restrict or regulate picketing or other strike activity was passed in a number of states. Under the Delaware, North Dakota and Utah laws, picketing is permitted only if the majority of the employees have voted in favor of a strike. In Delaware, Kansas, North Dakota, Oregon, and Utah a strike is unlawful unless approved by a majority vote of the employees.

Secondary boycotts were enacted making secondary boycotts illegal. Under Florida's law, all forms of secondary boycotting, and sympathy or jurisdictional strikes are illegal, and subject to injunction proceedings and damage suits. The Texas law prohibits secondary strikes and secondary boycotts. In Massachusetts, the boycotts which force the commission of an illegal act are prohibited. In California, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota and Pennsylvania enacted laws calling for the settlement of jurisdictional disputes through the arbitration technique, through regulation of the administrative process, or by order of a state agency.

Four states where no public utilities field was considered by 10 states which passed laws containing restrictive labor provisions applying severe penalties for any violations.

Similar laws covering employees were banned by laws enacted in 6 states. In Massachusetts and North Dakota hospitals are included in the definition of public employees.

Three states, Delaware, New Hampshire and North Dakota, require labor unions to register and to submit financial reports under certain conditions. Several state laws provide that labor unions may sue or be sued and in some cases specify that unions be responsible for actions of their authorized representatives.

The word "check-off" is limited under statutes of several states which prohibit the deduction from wages authorized the employer to make such deductions. In a number it is unlawful to require any person, as a condition of employment, to pay any fee or assessment to a labor organization.

Ry. Express Gives 15½-Cent Increase

Washington, D. C.—George Harrison, president of AFL's Railway Clerks, announced the signing of an agreement with the American Railway Express Agency providing a wage increase of 15½ cents an hour for 75,000 workers.

The wage increase was the same as that awarded by an arbitration board several days ago to 1,000,000 members of the railroad nonoperating unions. Mr. Harrison was a labor member of that board.

The express agency had declined to be represented at the arbitration proceeding, contending that its business differed from that of the railroad carriers themselves.

Mr. Harrison estimated that the wage increase totaled $30,600,000 annually. The 15½ cents an hour was that of those affected to $1.52½ an hour.

The increase was made effective as of Sept. 1, similar to the award made by the railroad arbitration board.

The agreement today affects not only the clerks but also members of two other unions, the Independent International Association of Express Clerks and the AFL Brotherhood of Blacksmiths.

JOB RIGHTS OF VETERANS CLARIFIED BY LABOR DEPT.

Washington, D. C.—Persons who enrolled in the armed forces within 90 days after their discharge therefrom are entitled to be restored to the positions they held prior to their original service, upon completion of their reenlistments, Robert K. Salyers, Director of the Veterans' Employment Rights Division, Department of Labor, said here.

Salyers emphasized that these rights hold even though the veteran have not, during the interim between discharge and reenlistment, applied for reinstatement to their former jobs.

The policy is a departure from the position taken by the Selective Service System which handled veterans' reemployment rights prior to last April 1.

DETROIT EMPLOYMENT UP

Detroit, Mich.—The Michigan Unemployment Compensation Commission reported that employment in the Detroit area rose to a peace-time high of 1,072,800 in July.

10% More Veterans Will Enter College

Washington, D. C.—The Veterans Administration estimated that 1,000,000 World War II veterans will go to college this fall, a 10 percent increase over the previous high enrollment.

The agency, basing its forecast on advance registrations, advised student-veteran candidates for attendance allowance to take along enough money to meet "total" school financial needs for at least the first six weeks of the semester.

Since veterans are not entitled to subsistence allowances until they have been in training a month, students without sufficient financial resources will not receive their first checks until October 1, it said.

The VA said that despite the increased work load it expects fewer than 1,000 veterans to receive their fall because certification procedures have been streamlined. The VA has more experienced employes and veterans are learning more about the understanding of subsistence-program regulations.

The agency advised veterans entering colleges for the first time to apply at once for certificates of eligibility, have their colleges approve their course of study or transfer to other schools to obtain regional office approval immediately.

CONNECTICUT AFL GROUP PLANS POLITICAL ACTION

Stamford, Conn.—The Connecticut Federation of Labor voted unanimously to the principle of political action. The annual convention, in its closing hours, voted to endorse principles contained in a 10-point resolution its nonpartisan political committee. A committee of seven committee was defeated. Instead, the convention supported the group, in almost unanimous action, after a debate that lasted 45 minutes.

In addition, the meeting voted to support a political campaign to defeat the six Connecticut legislators who voted for the Taft-Hartley Law.

Repeal of the state sales and use tax was called for in a resolution. Substitution of a business tax, as recommended by the retail merchants of the state, or a simplified income tax was endorsed.

Sen. Wagner Scores Retirement Rumors; Plans Fight on 'Pernicious' Labor Law

New York City.—Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York effectively squelched rumors of his retirement from the Senate and announced he would fight vigorously for repeal of the "pernicious" Taft-Hartley law and for the election next year of Governor Elender-Wagner housing bill.

The Senator, one of labor's staunchest supporters, who is convalescing from a long illness, made the statement attacking the "money-mad" real estate lobby, whose reactionary forces seeking to "render impotent" the labor union movement in this country. He said in part:

"I believe the greatest treason is being perpetrated on the American people and on democracy itself by the money-mad real estate lobby and their ready representatives in Congress.

"Even the Republicans have lost power the real estate lobby was able to achieve control where before they had only limited sway. Nevertheless the tures have not only prevented the necessary and comprehensive housing legislation but have succeeded in destroying an effective rent control program, a system of material priority for veterans housing; put obstacles in the way of reviving housing codes and ordinances and have been entirely silent but chief beneficiaries from their fight against the housing bill.

The housing problem must be solved. I know of no better cause to which I can dedicate myself.

"I feel deeply strongly about the present Taft-Hartley Labor Law. believe it to be in concept and evil in its objective which, I insist, is the destruction of the reactionary labor leader impotent the labor union movement in this country.

There is a great deal of wishful thinking about the Taft-Hartley law being in the Senate and my ability to get it there and fight it out. God has a way of helping those who are trying to help Him and His work—"to harbor the harborless."

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"For the Republicans have lost power the real estate lobby was able to achieve control where before they had only limited sway. Nevertheless the undoing the slick organization plans of the real estate lobby and their real estate bosses as well as their hireling servants in the Congress and their real estate bosses as well as their hireling servants in the Congress who conspiracy to enslave again the laboring men and women of our country.

HOURLY RATES UP IN JULY; WORKWEEK BELOW 40 HOURS

Washington, D. C.—Average weekly earnings in July for employees in all manufacturing industries were $49.25, or nearly equal to the all-time high of $49.28 reached in June, the states of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Despite an increase in hourly earnings, weekly pay dropped in proportion, due to a reduction of premium overtime in the 40 hours.

July average hourly earnings in the manufacturing industries rose in the rate of increase for manufacturing compared to previous months this year.

BUREAUS RETURN TO D. C.

Washington, D. C.—The Bureau of the Budget approved the plans to move four Federal agencies back to Washington this year. The agencies were relocated outside of Washington during the war.

Offices slated for return to the nation's capital are the Securities and Exchange Commission now in Philadelphia, the National Park Service, the Office of Indian Affairs, and the Fish and Wildlife Service, all of which are currently in Chicago.

EMPLOYERS WARNED ON CHILD LABOR VIOLATIONS

Washington, D. C.—The U. S. Department of Labor warned employers to abide by child labor laws in hiring minors.

With the reminder that most of the nation's schools have reopened, the Department stated there are specific regulations governing the employment of minors in almost every full-time or part-time job. It said the laws will be strictly enforced and urged employers to familiarize themselves with the Federal Labor Federal statutes to keep violations at a minimum.

AFL'S POTTERY WORKERS NEGOTIATE PAY-INCREASE

Pittsburgh, Pa.— Approximately 18,000 pottery workers in a score of plants across the country received wage increases of 6 cents an hour under the terms of a new contract recently negotiated here by the National Brotherhood of Operative Potters (AFL) and the U. S. Potters Association.

TRUMAN SETS NATIONAL EMPLOY HADICAPPED WEEK

Washington, D. C.—By proclamation the President designated October 5-11 as "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week."

Mr. Truman called upon Federal, state, and local public officials and leaders of labor, industry, and civic groups to exert every effort in a sustained drive aimed at employment and full use of the capacities of physically handicapped workers.

The American Federation of Labor has long supported this worthy cause through its affiliated labor unions.

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK PROCLAIMED BY TRUMAN

Washington, D. C.—President Truman called for the observance of "Fire Prevention Week" beginning October 5 and ending that day by his "Against doubled" during the past decade.

The President's proclamation said that fires cost the United States more than $560,000,000 in 1946.

He cautioned, he said, "fire threatens an even more calamitous loss of life and waste of material wealth."

He said preventable fires annually claimed the lives of thousands.

Chicago—AFL President William Green announced that organized labor "hatred" of the Taft-Hartley Act has grown "deeper and stronger" since its enactment.

His statement came after the opening session of the mid-summer session of the AFL Executive Council, at which the oppressive administration of the Taft-Hartley Act was considered as the first order of business.

At a press conference, Mr. Green revealed that members of the Executive Council had received hours in a general discussion of the new law's effects on labor unions and particularly on the regulations issued by the National Labor Board and the National Labor Relations Board.

Under Mr. Denham's directive, no union affiliated with the American Federation of Labor can bring complaint cases or petitions for elections before the NLRB without every member of the AFL Executive Council's Communist affidavits. This requirement, in the form of the signing of such affidavits by officers of the unions, has been opposed by many by the officers of their local unions.

Mr. Green announced that the Executive Council had decided to defer its decision on whether to sign the required non-Communist affidavits until the final day of the meeting. The postponement, he said, was necessary, "in order to receive further legal advice and additional information from the NLRB on the many new regulations."

Meanwhile, the Executive Council plunged into other pressing business on its agenda.

First, the council unanimously voted to appoint Charles J. MacGowan, president of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers to the 13th vice-presidency of the AFL, caused by the resignation of G. M. Bugniazet, former secretary-treasurer of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Mr. MacGowan now becomes 13th vice-president of the AFL and a member of the Executive Council. He is expected to come here from Kansas City to attend the current meeting.

Then the Executive Council took up consideration of the dangerous price situation and the continued inflationary trend. It is expected to issue a strong condemnation of the failure of the government's efforts thus far to bring the cost of living down.

The entire legislative program of the AFL and a series of important resolutions to be offered to the forthcoming AFL convention will come up for consideration at the session.

Another proposal to be presented by Mr. Green is to make effective day in 1948 a national holiday so that all workers can have a full opportunity to go to the polls and vote. He said that if this could not be obtained by enactment of a national law, unions should try to make agreements with employers to lay off work on that day. Similar agreements with public utilities vital to the public welfare would also be sought, Mr. Green said.

Labor is determined to get out the vote next year as never before, Mr. Green said, and to elect friendly candidates for Congress who voted against the Taft-Hartley Law and for a new Congress more responsible to labor's needs.

The AFL chief revealed that Trygve Lie, secretary-general of the United Nations Organization, had assured him that he would appear before the Executive Council later on at this session and discuss with him the role of UNO in the promotion of world peace and to relate the progress made to date in the organization's efforts to help the oppressed peoples of Europe and Asia.

BUILDING APPRENTICESHIP AT RECORD HIGH IN JULY

Washington, D. C.—Apprentices in building and construction trades in July time high of 102,640 during July, according to the report published by the Apprentice Training Service of the Labor Department.

Establishment of the record in July of 10,000 apprentices is a steady 26 percent increase in apprenticeship programs for building workers since the first of the year.

Following upon the joint sponsorship of these training programs by the AFL Building Trades, William F. Patterson, Director, Apprentice Training Service, said, "It reflects the get-together spirit of contractors and labor to meet the increasing demand."

MATTRESS WORKERS GROUP AFFILIATES WITH AFL UNION

Elizabeth, N. J.—Sal B. Hoffman, President of the Upholsterers' International Union, announced the affiliation with his organization of 1,600 members of the independent union representing employes of the Simmons Mattress & Bedding Co.

At the same time, Robert C. Greene, president of the Simmons local, who signed the agreement uniting the two labor groups, said "the union votes to affiliate with CIO to protect its 1,600 workers from 'dangers' of the Taft-Hartley Bill and to add our strength to organized labor."

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

SUPPLEMENT

WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1947 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

LABOR'S GOAL! To Repeal Taft-Hartley Law

Only Half Required Homes Being Built; High Materials Prices Retard Progress

Washington, D. C.—The United States is building only about half the homes it needs because of high prices of materials and construction.

This was attested to by the Government's top housing experts who appeared before a Senate-House Committee on Housing. Included in the group were Housing Expediter Frank Creedon, Raymond M. Foley, administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, and H. E. Riley, chief Labor Department statistician on construction.

The housing problem must be solved, and speedily, the authorities warned, because a generation of children is growing up under such "evil-lous" housing conditions that not only their own welfare but that of the nation is threatened.

The picture as it now stands is something like this, according to the experts:

The United States needs 1,500,000 new homes a year to provide a minimum of decent housing for its citizens.

The market will take only about 820,000, however, because prices are so high that only this number can be sold.

There are not enough materials now to produce even one million new dwellings a year.

Based on the index of 1927—in other words using prices of 1927 as 100 percent—wholesale living and material prices now average 177 percent.

But lumber, for example, is now 260 percent, and brick is up 160 percent.

High prices in large part go back to the old law of supply and demand and profit. There are certain shortages.

These are primarily soil pipe, nails, gypsum and lumber.

Creedon told the committee that in some cases boards of directors in any industry refuse to give the go-ahead signal for increasing production facilities for fear of over-expansion. Congressional conferences might help, such doubts, he declared.

Another important factor, the round table found, are antiquated building codes in some 2000 cities.

Some experts estimate that adoption of better building codes would cut building costs immediately by 5 to 10 percent, and cause even greater cuts in the future.

Restrictive practices on the part of both management and labor contribute to building costs, the round table said.

The current labor force is adequate, but inadequate—3,700,000 workers. The number of apprentices, more than 200,000, is also inadequate. In some cases management is unwilling to train enough apprentices.

Production is slowed by lack of enough young blood in the labor force.

This is partly because of the old story trades, where census figures show the average age of the worker is from 52 to 55.

Taft vs. GOP on Slave Law?

Washington, D. C.—Judging from recent developments, it looks as though Senator Robert A. Taft is determined that Congress should confer before talking separately to the public.

Senator Taft told a news conference he could possibly make an issue out of the Taft-Hartley law, a position ably and strongly refuted by AFL President William Green.

Prior to the Senator's statement, the GOP National Committee rushed to the printers with a pamphlet designed to acquaint anti-labor trade union members that the law is completely harmless and is, in fact, beneficial to American workers.

The publication, 70,000 copies of which were distributed, is in question and answer form and is entitled "The Facts About the Labor-Management Relations Act of 1947."

Significantly, the first question in the pamphlet reads, "Is the act a 'slave labor law'?" The answer, of course, is in the negative, but with "slave labor law" the key word in the Republican declaration emblemishments. The law is a "slave labor law" of workers' freedoms since Lincoln's emancipation proclamation freeing the Negro from slavery," says the pamphlet.

While Senator Taft may not agree, the Republican National Committee is just a bit worried lest American wage workers not take too kindly to this great "declaration of workers' freedoms."

51% of Employers Found Violating U. S. Minimum Wage, Overtime, Child Laws

Washington, D. C.—The Labor Department announced that more than half of the establishments inspected under the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Public Contracts Act violated provisions of the laws.

The inspectors of the Labor Department looked over the books of 29,350 establishments and found that of 20,570, or 51 percent, were in violation of the major provisions of the two laws, minimum wage, overtime or child labor.

A total of 580,000 establishments are covered by the two laws which affect some 21,500,000 persons. Thus, the number of places inspected were 5 percent of those covered. These inspections were made on the basis of complaints and studies indicating industries where violations existed.

The inspectors examined the books of the concerns for a specified period.

William P. McComb, administrator of the two laws, said that more than $18,000,000 in illegally withheld wages was found due 211,256 underpaid employes. Of this amount $5,864,000 was paid at the request of the division or on order by the courts to the 13,000 of the violating employers. The remaining 5,000 employers failed to pay the back wages due under the acts.

The announcement stated that the inspection figures showed the following results:

"Most violations—affecting approximately 14,000 employers and 175,000 employes involved in the restrictions—resulted from failure to pay for overtime hours beyond forty hours a week at the rate of at least time and one-half the employes' regular rate of pay, as required under the Wage and Hour Law.

"Of the employers making restitution over 2,700 owed back wages to some 37,000 of their employes who at the time of making the payments found by the inspections had not been paid any accordance with the 40 cents-an-hour minimum wage provision of the Fair Labor Act.

"Violations of child labor provisions of the two laws resulted in findings made in 185 establishments, and liquidated damages assessments for child labor violations cost 141 contractors $232,-000. Seventeen hundred minors were involved.

"Overtime violations usually result from failure on the part of employers to pay overtime wages to all employes—except those specifically exempted—covered by the Wage and Hour law. A large amount of overtime violations is improper allocations of bonus and special earnings in overtime calculations."

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION INCREASED DURING 1947

Washington, D. C.—The U. S. Department of Agriculture estimated that electric service will eventually reach another 800,000 farms and members under Rural Electrification Administration loans made during the fiscal year 1947.

The loans amounted to $251,349,172. They will enable borrowers to string more than 125,000 miles of power lines and step up the capacity of some existing systems in forty-four states and Alaska.

N. J. BUS DRIVERS AWARDED NEW PAY HIKE, VACATIONS

Newark, N. J.—More than 12,000 bus drivers in New Jersey, members of the AFL's Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway, and Motor Coach Employees of America, received hourly increases of 16½ cents an hour in a decision of a five-man arbitration board.

The increase, approved in a stipulation between the companies and the union, brings the employe's basic wage rate to $1.36 an hour.

LIST OF STATE MEDIATION AGENCIES NOW AVAILABLE

Washington, D. C.—The Department of Labor announced the availability of a compilation of mediation and conciliation agencies set up in 37 states and 3 territories.

The list, compiled by the Division of Labor Standards, is designed to "promote good management-labor meeting requirements of the Taft-Hartley law to notify state mediation agencies simultaneously with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service of disputes over the termination or modification of collective bargaining contracts.

MARGARET TRUMAN OK'D AS MEMBER OF AFL UNION

New York City.—Margaret Truman, daughter of the President, became a member of the AFL American Guild of Musical Artists when her application for membership was accepted by the union's board of governors, a union spokesman said.

Miss Truman, who has made one public appearance as a concert singer and a radio broadcast, will receive her membership card "soon," the spokesman said.

Executive Council Maps 1948 Political Campaign To Defeat Labor's Foes and Repeal 'Slave' Law

Council Demands Action On 'Alarming' Inflation

Chicago.—The AFL Executive Council declared that inflation has "assumed alarming proportions" and warned the nation that "unless the cost of living is promptly reduced and stabilized, pressure for higher wages is sure to mount."

Opposing the reimposition of price control, the Council declared the Government "must encourage expansion of production and prevent restraints upon production which create artificially high prices."

To stimulate the drive to provide a more bountiful supply of goods for American consumers, the Council recommended the immediate revision of our foreign export commitments, expansion of industrial and agricultural production, and expansion of transportation facilities to move our increased production.

The complete text of the Executive Council's statement is as follows:

Inflation has now assumed alarming proportions. The purchasing power of the wage-earner's dollar has been cut in half since the war. Food prices are now bursting through the roof. Economists are predicting a dollar a dozen eggs and a dollar a pound butter. Meat is going to be more scarce and more expensive. Substitute foods, because of increasing demand, will also shoot upward.

The burden of inflation falls heaviest upon the workers because wages cannot keep pace with rising prices. Unless the cost of living is promptly reduced and stabilized, pressure for higher wages is certain to mount.

Proposals from some quarters that Government price controls be restored are not encouraging. The Executive Council, it is ridiculous to suppose that the present Congress would approve such legislation. While the OPA was killed prematurely, it is now dead and cannot be revived. Government regulation and control of prices is abhorrent in a free economy. We must look elsewhere for a permanent solution of this pressing problem.

The Executive Council recommends three specific measures:

1—Immediate revision of our foreign export commitments.

2—Encouragement to the expansion of industrial and agricultural production.

3—An expansion in our transportation facilities to move our increased production.

It is time for America to take stock of its resources, its needs and its productive potential. It is time also for a similar international inventory, in connection with the Marshall Plan.

The Executive Council believes that our country should continue to extend all possible assistance to those countries which are willing to cooperate with us for the preservation of world peace. However, our resources are not inexhaustible. There are limits beyond which we cannot go without unwisely inviting economic disaster. These safety limits must be definitely set and observed. That effective steps are now being taken to prevent further speculative booms that can only end in a crash. It must be remembered that the first essential to restoration of a sound world economy is the maintenance of a sound economy here in America.

In the long run, the only way to bring our national economy into balance and shake prices down to their natural level is greater and still greater production with a resumption of free competitive enterprise. The Government must encourage expansion of production and prevent restraints upon production which create artificially high prices. It can best do this not by such artificial props as guaranteeing non-industries against loss or incentive payments, but by increasing minimum wage levels to a point commensurate with decent minimum living standards. Millions of American workers and their families are still submerged at income levels far below subsistence standards. The present minimum wage of 40 cents an hour is a disgrace to our country and a blight on an expanding economy.

America has not yet reached the end of its economic frontiers. We can produce more and we can consume more. Our great present danger is not surpluses but continuing shortages. These must be wiped out before living costs can go back to normal.

Average Earnings Increased in June; Real Wages Still Lower Than in 1944

Washington, D. C.—Average earnings of factory workers increased in June but the gain was only on paper according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Weekly wages were $49.37, up $.93 over May, but rising prices entirely wiped out the increase, BLS said.

In fact, the "real" wages of manufacturing employes are 10 percent less than during any year of the war, the bureau declared.

BLS estimated that the "net spendable" earnings in June decreased in terms of the 1939 buying power of the dollar, were only $26.50 for a single person and $29.97 for a family with two children. That figure was approximately the same as during the war years and income taxes, and taking into account the soon in force.

A comparison with 1944, the war year in which workers' "spendable" wages reached a peak, illustrate with particular emphasis what has happened to pay envelopes.

In dollars, factory workers are drawing $3.50 a week more than in 1944, despite a substantial loss in overtime. But in terms of buying power workers have lost $6 to $8 a week less "spendable" money now than in that year.

The fact is that ever since the war ended, "the wage earners of America have not been able to keep abreast of the rising cost of living," declared Labor Lewis B. Schwellenbach declared.

An alarming proof of this, he pointed out that "savings by wage earners decreased 45 percent between 1945 and 1946."

"Furthermore, our lower - income families, who are most in need of a savings cushion, have not been the hardest hit," he explained.

"The top one - third of all families in which total earnings of all employed members is less than $3,000 a year. These make up 30 percent of the population, but in 1946 their earnings were only 12 percent of the nation's income and, still worse, 'they accounted for 3 percent of the net personal savings for the year,' he declared.

"That fact becomes more startling when it is realized that the majority of the families in this country in the upper bracket are those in the middle of the income accounted for 93 percent of the savings in 1946," he added.

And yet, some people are critical of workers for seeking higher wages, Schwellenbach said. At a time when corporations are making huge profits and building up big reserves, it is entirely unreasonable to expect that workers "should dip into their savings and let the future take care of itself."

FEINBERG, ILGWU LEADER, LAUDED FOR HIS SERVICE

New York City.—A crowd of 1,000 persons in Town Hall paid tribute to Israel Feinberg, vice-president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and general manager of the New York Cloak Joint Board of the union, in celebration of his 40 years of service in the labor movement.

David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, said Mr. Feinberg had been instrumental in bringing to the cloak makers the high standards and conditions that had placed them at the top level of American workers.

"The establishment of health, vacation and retirement funds in the cloak industry," Mr. Dubinsky added, "is due to his persistence and vision."

GI UNEMPLOYMENT PAY TOPS $2.5 BILLION MARK

Washington, D. C.—The Veterans Administration announced that over $2½ billion has been paid to veterans in unemployment and readjustment allowances since the fall of 1944.

However, only half of the nation's 14,500,000 World War II veterans have received readjustment payments of any kind and fewer than 8 in every 100 have claimed all of the allowances to which they are entitled under the GI bill.

Unemployment payments were made to an average of 750,000 veterans during July, 1947, compared with a weekly peak of 1,800,000 a year earlier. Self-employed claimants numbered 250,000 during June, 1947, compared with a monthly peak of 322,000.

TRUMAN LAUDS DUBINSKY AS 'TOWER OF STRENGTH'

Chicago.—The Jewish Labor Committee tendered a testimonial dinner to David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, who is first vice-president of the AFL Executive Council meeting here.

Among the felicitations received by Mr. Dubinsky was a letter from President Truman, praising the labor leader. Mr. Truman said:

"David Dubinsky has been a tower of strength in the labor movement. He has never lost sight of the fundamental principle under our free economic system that management and labor are associates who work together for their mutual benefit and for the benefit of the public. As one who has always stood four-square for true Americanism, he deserves the thanks and appreciation of good citizens everywhere."

Council Demands McCann Be Fired

Chicago.—The AFL Executive Council demanded the immediate removal of Irving G. McCann from his position as general counsel for the House Committee investigating labor disputes in Hollywood.

The Executive Council declared McCann's removal from office, the Council issued the following statement:

"The Executive Council demands the removal from office of Irving G. McCann, General Counsel for the House Labor Sub-committee which is investigating labor disputes in Hollywood.

"Mr. McCann demonstrated his unfitness when, at the Subcommittee's recent hearings in Los Angeles, he abusively attacked Joseph A. Padway, Chief Counsel for the American Federation of Labor and grossly insulted AFL witnesses, particularly Secretary-Treasurer Walter P. Reuther, a member of this Council.

"Mr. McCann's conduct was a disgrace to Congress and a shocking insult to the American Federation of Labor and the 7,500,000 American workers it represents.

"The subsequent apologies made by Mr. McCann and Mr. McCann cannot erase his misbehavior nor restore public confidence in the fairness of the investigation.

"The only way the House Labor Committee can repudiate his reprehensible conduct is by discharging him. If the committee retains him as counsel the American Federation of Labor will withdraw from participation in proves his inexcusable and indefensible conduct."

FILM UNIONS AGREE ON JURISDICTIONAL TRUCE

New York City.—Heads of the thirteen film unions in Hollywood signed an agreement with New York City film producers providing that all jurisdictional disputes would be solved through the machinery of the agreement is to run for a period of 5 years.

The agreement was announced the union officials for the part they played in bringing film producers to make more movies in New York City.

FEDERAL JOBS DECLINE

Washington, D. C.—The number of civilians employed in the executive branch of the federal government declined from 2,128,648 at the end of June to 2,088,966 at the end of July, the Civil Service Commission reported.

40 Hours Awarded Australian Workers

Sydney, Australia.—The forty-hour week has become the basic industrial policy throughout Australia with the announcement by the Labor and Industry arbitration court to grant the shorter week to workers in the last major hour week in effect over the last 29 years.

Nearly 1,000,000 Australians will benefit from the decision when forty hours take effect next January.

Announcing the decision, Chief Judge Kelly said the arbitration Justices, Judges Dethridge and Foster, had agreed unanimously, should limit the hours of labor in the role of employers to oppose workers' claims for increased leisure hours. Employers had not claimed much in 100 years.

AFL Leaders Demand Action to Halt Inflation, Call for 4-Power Parley to Plan Peace, Reaffirm Need for Labor Unity

Chicago.—The AFL Executive Council voted to launch an intensive political campaign in 1948 to defeat labor's enemies and bring about repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act.

President William Green predicted at a press conference that the forthcoming San Francisco Convention will overwhelmingly endorse the council's recommendations and vote a substantial fund to carry them out.

While the council's specific plans will not be made public until its report to the convention is released, Mr. Green outlined the general program as follows:

1—To conduct a serious registration drive so that all workers and those friendly to labor's cause will be qualified to vote at the 1948 elections.

2—To create special committees operating in every election ward and precinct to see to it that qualified voters in the ranks of labor go to the polls and cast their ballots on election day.

3—To set aside election day as a non-working holiday, either by legislation or by agreements with employers, so that all wage earners will have the opportunity to vote.

Mr. Green declined to estimate how large a fund will be required to carry on these activities. He said that would be up to the convention to decide. He indicated that the convention also will be asked to determine whether a separate political organization shall be created or whether the campaign machinery shall be operated through city central bodies and state federations of labor.

In reply to questions, Mr. Green said the extent to which the federation will support political campaigns in 1948 will depend on the circumstances in each case.

"Make no mistake about it," he said, "the Taft-Hartley Act will be the big issue in 1948 and we are going to make it the big issue in each congressional district will have an opportunity to register their mandate on that particular issue."

Told that Senator Robert A. Taft, of Ohio, had declared that the Taft-Hartley Act, of which he was co-author, would not be a political issue in 1948, Mr. Green tartly responded: "If Senator Taft made that statement, he is the only man in the country who knows it that way. So far as labor is concerned, the Taft-Hartley Act is the big issue. We will do everything in our power to defeat those who voted for the passage of that law and to elect a new Congress which will repeal that obnoxious law."

Other decisions of the council, announced at its midsummer session here neared conclusion were:

1—An insistent demand for prompt action to halt inflation and reverse the alarming and continuing price boosts which are lifting the cost of living to record heights.

2—Sharp warning that the world is headed toward another war which the United Nations appear powerless to avert and an appeal for a new four-power conference to reach a showdown with Soviet Russia and preserve world peace.

3—Reaffirmation of the AFL's policy toward the CIO, with the flat declaration that organic unity and an actual merger of the two organizations must take place before there can be any collaboration on political legislative or economic matters.

In explaining the latter decision, Mr. Green said:

"In the present emergency facing the labor movement, the primary requirement is to end the destructive warfare and bitterness which prevail in the ranks of labor. There must be an end to raiding and the waste of unionmen's time and energies in fighting each other before true collaboration is possible.

"The CIO's position of maintaining our separate identities and making a pretense of unity while organizational conflicts still continue will do no good. That's only temporizing and will not bring an actual merger of the two organizations."

Mr. Green frankly told newspaper reporters that the prospects of immediate AFL-CIO merger were not too bright.

"There are certain difficulties which I want to see it happen," he said.

In response to persistent questioning, he identified these "individuals" as belonging to a "group of Communists" in the CIO.

However, he insisted that the AFL peace committee stands ready to resume negotiations with a similar committee of the CIO at any time when the CIO indicates it is ready to work out the ways and means of bringing about a merger.

The Executive Council meeting will be prolonged at least one day by a conference called to attempt to settle jurisdictional problems in the Hollywood motion picture industry. Representatives of the motion picture companies and the AFL unions involved were invited to sit down with the Executive Council to seek a permanent solution of the controversy which has been in progress more than two years.

Executive Council Urges 4-Power Parley; Slaps At Russia's 'Expansionist' Policy

Chicago.—The AFL Executive Council called for a new meeting of the heads of the great powers "in the spirit of effective progress and cooperation for world peace."

In a special foreign policy statement, the Council rapped the "aggressive expansionist policy of Soviet Russia" as responsible for the turmoil and tensions existing in the world affairs.

Declaring that the United Nations Organization has proved itself "almost impotent," the statement warned that the United States for the present is forward seeking an immediate clarification of the difficulties existing between other countries and Russia, and that it support the United Nations Organization if international relations and reverse the drift toward an "eventual break" which "appears inevitable" unless strong and constructive leadership.

The Executive Council's statement is as follows:

The cause of lasting world peace is losing ground.

Throughout Europe and Asia the basic cause conflicts abound and the situation is little better than an armed truce.

Only in the Western Hemisphere is peace solidly entrenched and safeguarded by effective international agreements.

Beyond question, the aggressive expansionist policy of Soviet Russia is responsible for the turmoil and tensions that exist in many nations of Europe and Asia.

While the threat of war hangs over such broad areas, hope for speedy economic reconstruction and peaceful progress will be in vain.

When the United Nations Organization was formed the peace-loving peoples of the world confidently expected that it would be powerful enough to extinguish any warlike bonfires that might arise.

But, in practice, the UNO has proved itself almost impotent. It is being openly defied by some of the great nations and secretly circumvented by smaller ones. Without the cooperation of the great powers, the American people have reached the definite impression that the UNO lacks power to keep the peace.

Already, only two years since V-J Day, military leaders are talking publicly in terms of another war. They contend it will be a "push-button" war and others express the belief that hostilities will break out so soon that troops and battleships will still be needed.

Indeed, incredible as it seems, the UNO has failed in all this time even to bring about friendly relations between the United States and the horrors of atomic warfare and to develop unclear energy for the betterment of the human race.

The deterioration of international relations toward such alarming proportions that an eventual break appears inevitable unless strong and constructive leadership is exercised.

The American Council believes that the United States should not be content with sitting back and waiting for the next move by Russia. We are convinced that our country should take the initiative toward seeking an immediate clarification of the difficulties existing between our country and Russia. War with Russia should be prevented if at all possible. Delay and shadow-boxing, diplomatic maneuvers will not solve but only aggravate the issues.

It is a long time, perhaps too long, since the heads of the great powers, which cooperated so successfully during the war, sat down together to exchange views and reach understandings.

The Executive Council believes a new conference is necessary to end existing impasses and to chart a more effective program of cooperation for world peace in the future.